

ALL IN COLOUR - MAKES LEARNING A JOY

Once Upon a Time

EVERY WEDNESDAY

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PRICE 1/3

*Happy
Christmas!*



Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs



1. "Magic mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" asked the wicked Queen—and the answer she got back was not the one she expected. "I only speak of what is true—the fairest one is still not YOU!" replied the mirror. "Snow White's not dead as you had planned, so SHE is fairest in the land." When she heard this, the Queen struck the mirror with a candlestick.



2. "It cannot be possible!" she shrieked. But it was really true. Thanks to the arrival of a handsome Prince, Snow White had recovered from the effects of the poisoned apple given to her by the jealous Queen. The magic mirror knew this—and then, as the angry Queen struck it blow after blow with the heavy candlestick, it fell from the wall and landed heavily on top of her.



3. That was the end of the wicked Queen, but no one shed a tear of sorrow for such a vain and cruel person. Next day, a town crier came to the market place and rang his bell for attention.

4. "Hear ye, hear ye!" he called out. "Let it be known this day that the sweetest and fairest Princess of all, by the name of Snow White, will be married to the Prince who rescued her."



5. And so it was. The church steeple bells rang out and the people cheered when they saw the Prince and his bride. "Snow White is truly the fairest of all," they shouted.

6. As you might well have expected, the most important guests at the gay wedding were the Seven Dwarfs. All dressed in their best, they led the way, feeling very proud of sweet Snow White.





Most of you will have had roast turkey to eat at Christmas time. The name may have come from the "turk-turk-turk" noise they make, but some people think that many years ago merchants known as Turks traded the birds which became known as turkey-fowls. There are several different kinds, mostly found in America, and they are numbered in the picture as: 1. Honduras turkey; 2. Rio Grande turkey; 3. Pilgrim's turkey; 4. Domestic turkey; 5. Florida turkey; 6. Mexican turkey; 7. Merriam's turkey.



BRER RABBIT

This week: Will o' the Wisp's Christmas Present. By Barbara Hayes.

NOW as you all know, children, Christmas time is the time for giving presents, and as Christmas drew near, Brer Rabbit said to himself:

"I wonder what all the other animals are going to give me for Christmas presents?"

So Brer Rabbit went lickety-clipping along to Brer Wolf's house and listened under the window, while Brer Wolf made out his Christmas present list.

And Brer Rabbit heard Brer Wolf say: "Well, I'm not buying a present for that

scamp Brer Rabbit and that's for sure. He tricks me out of too many things as it is."

Brer Rabbit's feeling were mighty hurt, I can tell you.

Then Brer Wolf came out and went to call on Brer Bear.

"I'm not buying any Christmas present for that scamp Brer Rabbit," said Brer Wolf to Brer Bear. "And if you take my advice, neither will you."

"All right, Brer Wolf. I won't buy him one either," said Brer Bear.

Then Brer Wolf went to see Brer Fox

and said: "I'm not buying any Christmas present for that scamp Brer Rabbit and if you take my advice, neither will you."

And Brer Fox agreed not to buy a present.

Then Brer Wolf called on Brer Coon and Brer Weasel and persuaded them not to buy Christmas presents for Brer Rabbit.

And all the while, Brer Rabbit was following Brer Wolf and listening in with his big ears a-flapping and he was growing more hurt and more cross at every word he heard.

In the end he was so furious that the hair on his neck stood on end and he gnashed his teeth and bunched his front paws up into big fists.

And it was just at this minute that he happened to catch sight of his reflection in a pond.

He looked so fierce that he almost frightened himself.

"Why, I look almost as frightening as Will o' the Wisp, the naughty demon of the forest," he thought.

And that gave him an idea.

Brer Rabbit kicked up his heels and ran to the village shop, and there he bought the biggest, best and prettiest box of chocolates in the whole village.

Then he carried it home in his arms and was very careful to walk past the house of Brer Wolf.

"That's a mighty fine box of chocolates you've got there, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Wolf.

"It surely is."

"Is it a Christmas present?" asked Brer Wolf.

"It surely is."

"Who's it for?" Brer Wolf wanted to know.

"Will o' the Wisp."

"Will o' the Wisp?" gasped Brer Wolf.

"Yes, Will o' the Wisp."

"Why are you giving him a present, Brer Rabbit?"

"Because Will o' the Wisp has sworn that he will come and knock down the house of anyone who does not leave a present on the doorstep for him on Christmas Eve."

Then Brer Rabbit went past the house of Brer Bear.

"That's a mighty fine box of chocolates you've got there, Brer Rabbit," said Brer Bear.

"It surely is."

"Is it a Christmas present?" asked Brer Bear.

"It surely is."

"Who's it for?" Brer Bear wanted to know.

"Will o' the Wisp."

"Will o' the Wisp?" gasped Brer Bear.

"Yes, Will o' the Wisp."

"Why are you giving him a present, Brer Rabbit?"

"Because Will o' the Wisp has sworn that he will come and knock down the house of anyone who does not leave a present on the front doorstep for him on Christmas Eve."

Then Brer Rabbit carried his box of chocolates past the homes of Brer Fox and Brer Weasel and Brer Coon, and always the conversation was the same.

By the time Brer Rabbit had finished, I can tell you, the other animals were mighty scared.

They dashed to the shops, and Brer

Wolf bought a fine turkey. Brer Bear bought a Christmas pudding. Brer Coon bought a boxful of salty nuts. Brer Weasel bought some chocolate dates. Brer Fox bought a box of almonds and raisins.

Then, on Christmas Eve, they put the presents outside their houses and hid under their beds, until they heard Will o' the Wisp come and take the presents away.

But, of course, it wasn't really Will o' the Wisp who came, was it?

It was Brer Rabbit.

How he and his family did enjoy all those lovely presents—and how they laughed.

Brer Rabbit wishes you all a very Happy Christmas and will meet you again next week.

BRER RABBIT'S RIDDLES

1. When is it right to lose your temper?
2. What can you look through but not see through?
3. Which animal is it best to be on a cold day?
4. How many sides has a ball?

Answers:

1. When it is a bad one; 2. A book; 3. A little otter (otter); 4. Two, an inside and an outside.



Fishing with trained birds



1. Cormorants are found in most countries of the world. They nest on rocky ledges near the sea where they can easily find fish to eat. Some cormorants grow to three feet in length, and on land they look awkward and clumsy with their big webbed feet.

2. In the water, however, cormorants can move at great speed, using their webbed feet and wings to drive them along as they chase after fish. The picture above gives you a good idea of the keen eyes and long, snapping beak of a fish-hunting bird.



3. In India, China and Japan, fishermen have been using the cormorant to help them catch fish for many years. When the boats set out at night they carry a lantern or a basket of burning wood on a long pole. The light attracts fish to the boat.

4. The fishing cormorants perch on the sides of the boat and each one has a thin cord tied round its neck. This stops the cormorants from swimming away and also stops them from swallowing the fish they catch for their owner in their quick-snapping beaks.



5. When a likely fishing spot is reached, the fisherman lets the boat drift and starts his "bird-fishing" by letting his cormorants drop down into the water. He still keeps hold of their cords.



6. Soon the birds start bringing up fish. They are well trained and seem to know what they are doing—and, of course, they get a share of the catch later from the grateful fisherman himself.

Well, Fancy That!



This little animal is called a Chameleon (say "kam-eel-e-on"). Strange as it may seem, it can change its colour for different reasons, such as light or shade, anger or fear. Even a rise or fall of temperature will cause the Chameleon to change its colour. When scared, it becomes speckled brown or green.



Do you like to eat potatoes — especially when they are cut in lengths and fried and served as chips? Everybody knows what a potato looks like but it is a strange fact that until 400 years ago nobody in Europe had seen a potato. Sir Walter Raleigh, an explorer who made voyages from England to far-off lands, saw them in America and brought some home.

Lapwings are birds which fly to Southern lands for winter. In spring they return, and in Holland boys and girls keep an eye open for them. The Dutch child who finds the first lapwing's egg has the right to present it to Holland's Queen.



This is a Memory Test. When you have read the story turn to page 16 and answer questions about it.

The Motto

ONCE upon a time, there was a vicar living in the village of Brayfield. His house was huge but it was rather a wreck.

Inside the house the vicar's wife and pretty daughter Matilda worked hard all day long to keep it clean, especially when rain poured in through the leaky roof.

"It is coming near to Christmas," he said, "and I have made up my mind that it will be the last Christmas we shall spend under this leaky roof. I shall have it repaired."

"How can you do that when you have no money?" asked his wife.

The vicar pointed out of the window. Outside was his horse, which carried him on visits to the village.

"I have my own legs and feet," he replied. "I will sell the horse at the fair in the next town."

He set off for the big fair in the next town. When he got there he stood among the noisy crowd and took off the horse's saddle to show that the animal was for sale.

Several men came along. One looked at the horse's teeth, another felt its legs and another felt its back. And all of them shook their heads.

The poor vicar grew sadder and sadder. Then suddenly a tall young man came along, and the vicar was amazed to hear him say to a fat friend in a striped waistcoat, "What do you think, Reuben? Would twenty pounds be a fair price?"

"I reckon so, Master Jeremy, if the vicar would accept," his friend said.

"Of course," said the vicar.

"But there is one condition," the young man added. "And it is that I may come and join you at your Christmas dinner."

So the deal was made and, on Christmas Day, the young man rode to the vicar's house, bringing with him a box of crackers.

"Pull a cracker with me, Matilda," he said. When the cracker split open with a snap, out fell a diamond ring and a piece of paper.

Matilda picked up the ring. "Why, it's real!" she gasped. Then aloud she read the printed motto on the paper:

*"The kindest friend you ever knew,
Will bring the greatest joy to you."*

Jeremy smiled at the vicar, his wife and the blushing Matilda.

"It was a trick on my part," he admitted. "I have often wished to meet your lovely daughter, vicar, in the hope that she will marry me."

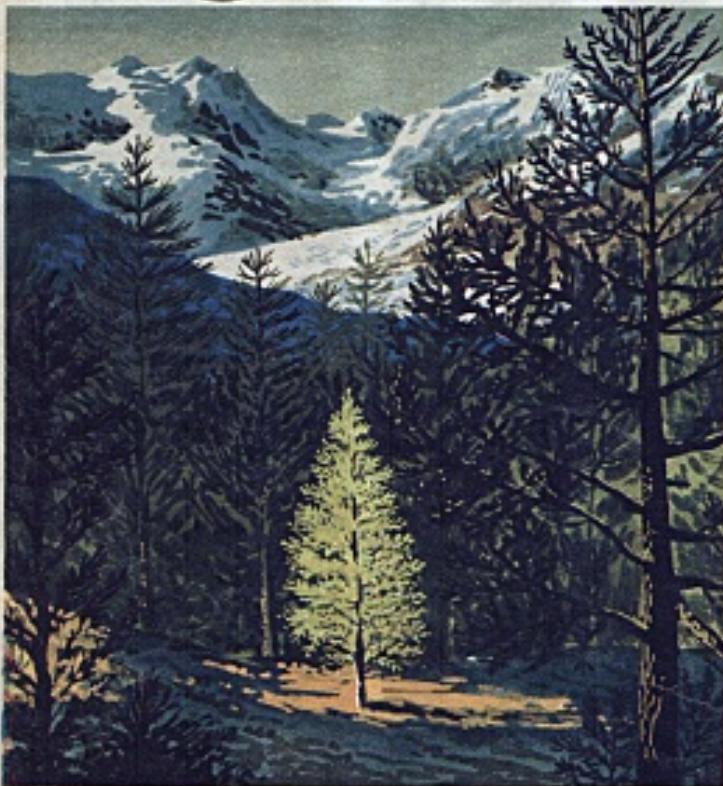
Jeremy's answer was in the sparkling eyes of Matilda—and the old house was full of joy on that Christmas Day.



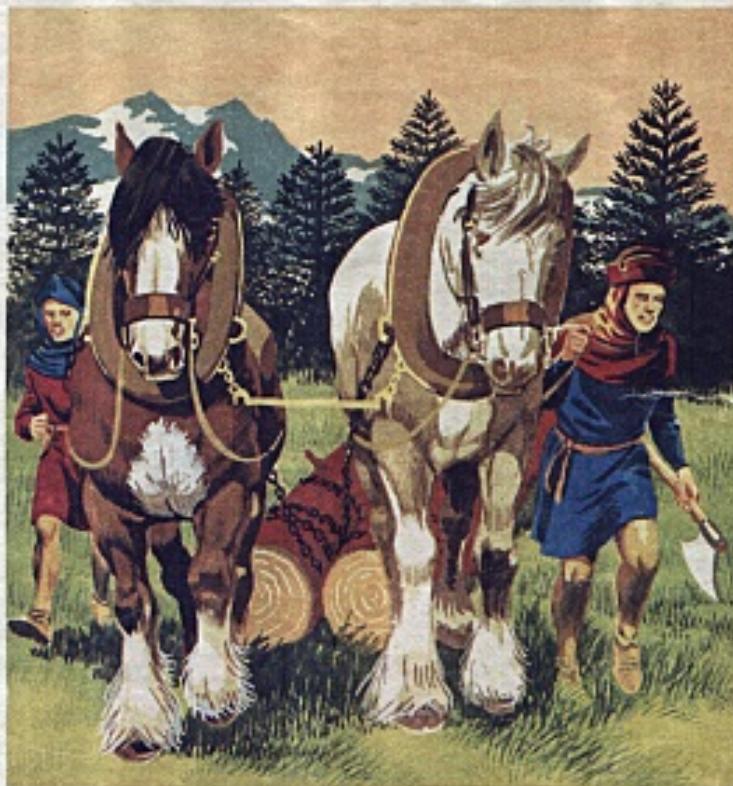


H.M. BROWN

The Little Fir-Tree



1. Once upon a time in the country of Norway a little fir-tree grew in a forest. It was a pretty tree, nicely-shaped and a lovely green in colour — but it was not very happy. When a soft breeze stirred its branches it seemed to sigh louder than the other trees which grew around it, much older and much taller.



2. "Oh, how I would love to be as tall as they are and stand with my head high up in the sky," said the little fir-tree to itself. "Down here, I feel so crowded-in and useless." As the days of summer passed, men came to the forest and cut down the tallest of the older fir trees, using horses to drag them away.



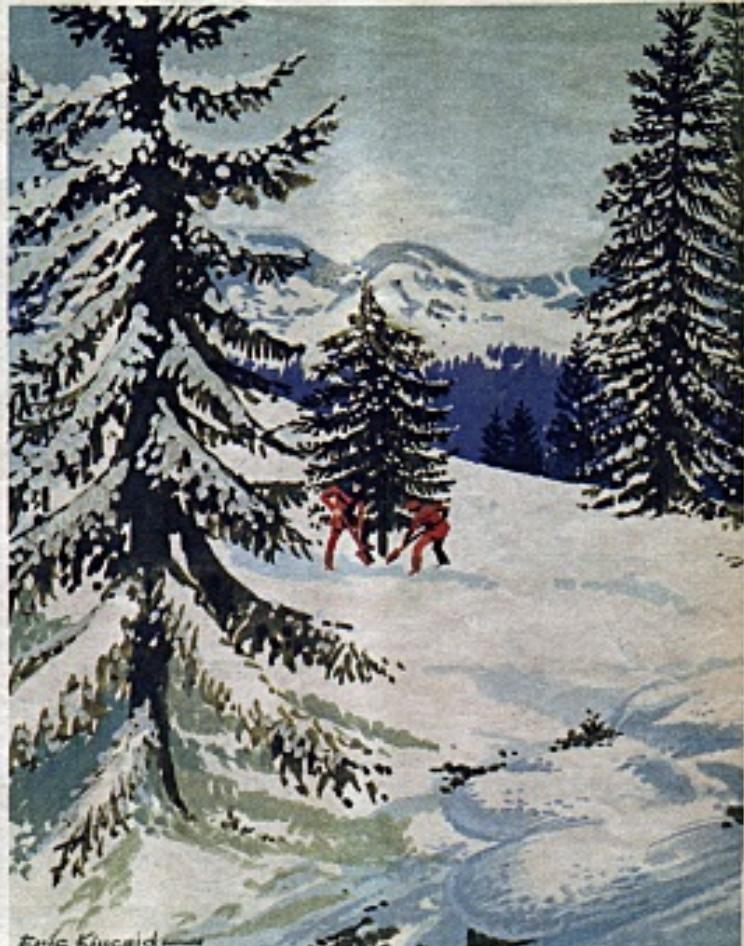
3. By the Autumn, many of the bigger trees had gone. "Why is it that the woodcutters always pass me by?" asked the little fir-tree, speaking to a wise owl perched on a branch. "I'm a very handsome tree but nobody seems to want me. Please tell me why."



4. "The men take the big trees because their tall, straight trunks are needed for many things," replied the owl. "Some of them become flag-poles and spend their lives standing proudly on the topmost turret of a castle with a flag fluttering from them."



5. Seeing that the little fir-tree was listening very carefully to every word he said, the owl went on. "The trunks of other trees become the masts of ships and carry the sails that take them across the oceans of the world. They have to be straight and strong for a job like that." "I see," said the little fir-tree.



6. "Because I am small, such exciting things will never be for me. Nobody will ever want me." Winter came and snow lay on the ground. One day some men came and they started to dig up the little fir-tree. "Why should they want me?" wondered the tree, feeling very puzzled. "Surely they must have made a mistake."



7. There was no mistake. The little fir-tree was taken to a big house and placed in a pot and dressed for Christmas with gay decorations and gifts. And as the happy children danced around it, the little fir-tree knew what it was to feel happy and proud.

Beautiful Paintings

Many thousands of beautiful pictures of Jesus Christ have been painted by artists all over the world. Here is one which readers of "Once Upon A Time" may like to cut out and keep at this special time of the year. You might know that in the Bible Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." What He meant was that He loved little children and that He was never too busy to talk to them—and this is something which we should remember on Christmas Day, the birthday of Jesus. (This delightful picture is reproduced from a print supplied by the Pallas Gallery, London.)

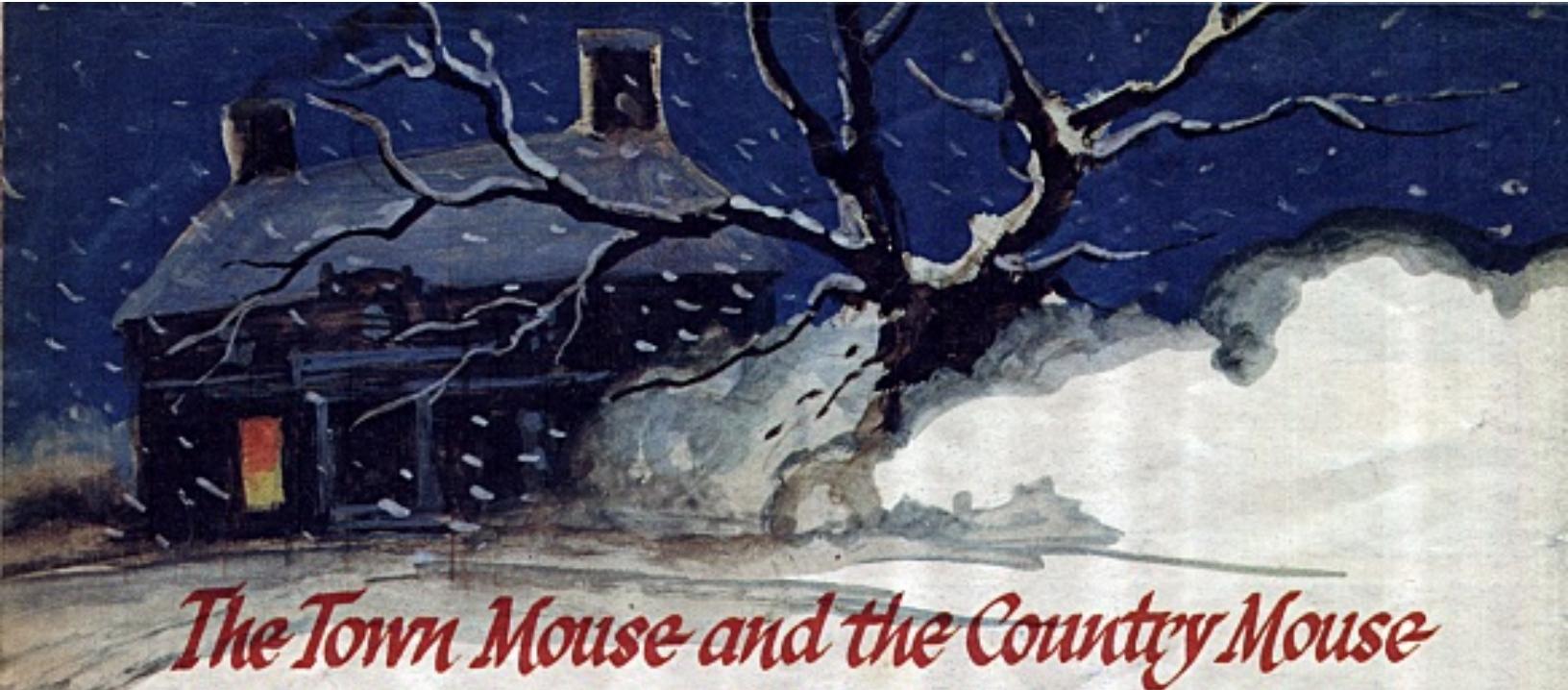


Greece and its Islands



On the left is the flag of Greece and on the right is a map of Europe showing where Greece is. At Corinth, a canal has been made, allowing ships to get more quickly to Piraeus, the seaport close to the capital city of Athens. This canal, which is straight from end to end, cuts the mainland of Greece into two, so that the southern part has now really become another of the many islands in that part of the Mediterranean Sea.





The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse

The Christmas log fire. By Barbara Hayes.

STEPHANIE, the town mouse, was out in the country looking for a supply of logs, so that she could have a real log fire for her Christmas party.

For a moment she had thought she had found the logs, when she saw Bertie bringing a load of logs to Winifred, the country mouse.

But then, Stephanie in her sneering way had called Bertie a country bumpkin.

"These logs are for my Winifred," Bertie had said, "not for a stuck-up town mouse like you, Stephanie."

For a moment it looked as if everyone was going to start quarrelling, which wouldn't have been nice at all.

But then Nigel, who had been looking at the logs on the cart, said, "I say, Bertie, old fruit, these logs are the sawn-up branches of a tree. What happened to the tree trunk itself?"

And Bertie, forgetting about the next rude thing he had been wanting to say to Stephanie, said instead, "Oh I had to leave that lying in the woods. It's too big for me to cut up on my own—and in any case the logs from it would have been far too big for my Winifred's little fireplace."

Nigel thought for a moment—and then suddenly he snapped his fingers and said—"A Yule log. That's what that tree trunk you have left in the wood is called, Bertie. It's called a Yule log!"

Winifred, Stephanie and Bertie all stared at Nigel.

Then Stephanie said in her clever, clever way: "How does knowing what it's called help me?"

"Well," said Nigel, "when I was a boy, the old squire, who lived at the big house, used to have a tree trunk taken into his house every Christmas. You see, his house was the only one with a big enough fireplace to take such a big piece of wood. The tree trunk was called the

Yule log and it was burnt to make a lovely fire on Christmas day and everyone would gather round and roast their Christmas dinner over the Yule log and have a lovely party.

"Now, Stephanie, if you had a Yule log party, it would be a grand treat and make you seem as important as the squires from the old days."

Of course, Stephanie thought that was a wonderful idea. She liked anything that made her seem important.

But then she thought again.

"Nigel, you are a blockhead," she said. "How could I burn a big tree trunk on my little fireplace in my town house?"

"Don't have the party in your house," smiled Nigel. "Have it in the Old Grange. Don't you remember that country mansion we discovered the day we fell into the river? The young man who lived there said he would love to hire the place out for parties."

So it was settled.

Stephanie booked up the Old Grange for a party on Christmas Day.

Nigel tied the Yule log to the back of his car and towed it over to the Old Grange. Then he and Bertie pulled and pushed and huffed and puffed and grunted and snorted to get it up the steps and into the hall and on to the fireplace.

And they weren't helped by Stephanie telling them that they were pulling when they should be pushing and huffing when they should be puffing and grunting when they should be snorting.

If Winifred hadn't been there to make them all nice cups of tea, I don't know what would have happened.

But in the end they all had a lovely Christmas party in front of the Yule log in the great hall.

But the nicest part was when the others had gone and Bertie and Winifred and Nigel and Stephanie and the boy who

owned the hall sat round the glowing embers of the Yule log, eating up the party left-overs and talking about the old days, when they had been very young and there had been nothing to worry about.

There will be another mouse story next week.

Greetings from the Editor

Dear Boys and Girls,

This is "Once Upon A Time's" first Christmas and I would like to send you all my good wishes. I hope that you have a happy time and enjoy the Christmas gifts you receive—and also enjoy the pleasure and excitement of giving gifts to others in your family, and to your friends. Happy Christmas to you all!

Your friend, The Editor.

Here are some questions about the Christmas story "The Motto" on page 10. See how many you can get right.

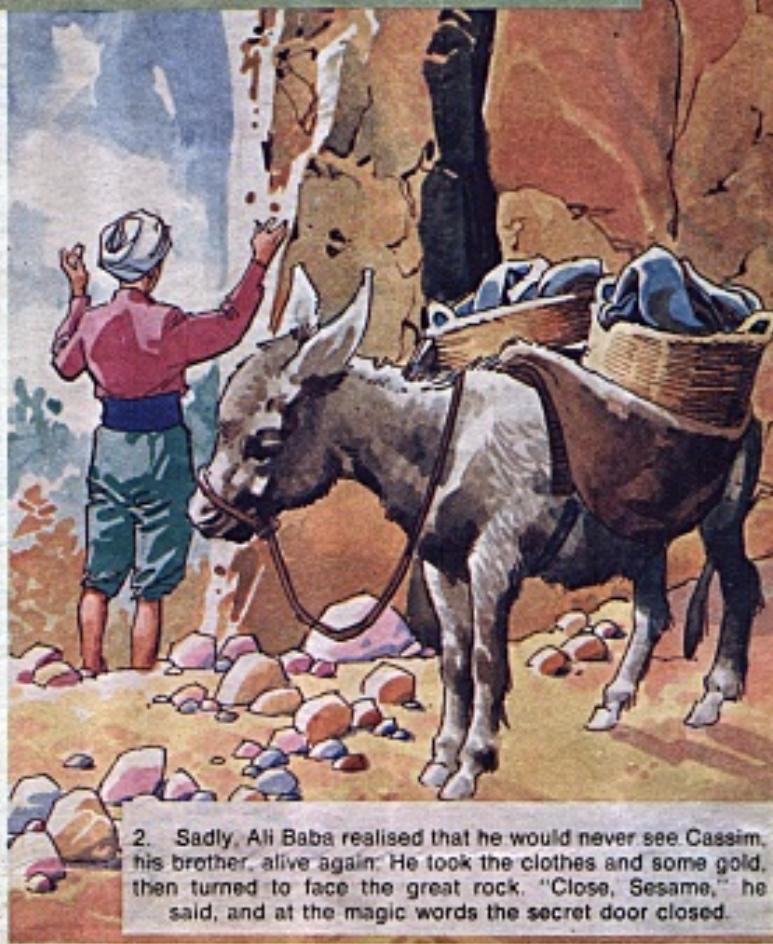
1. Where did the poor vicar live?
2. What was the name of the young man's friend in the striped waistcoat?
3. What did the motto say?



ALI BABA and the Forty Thieves



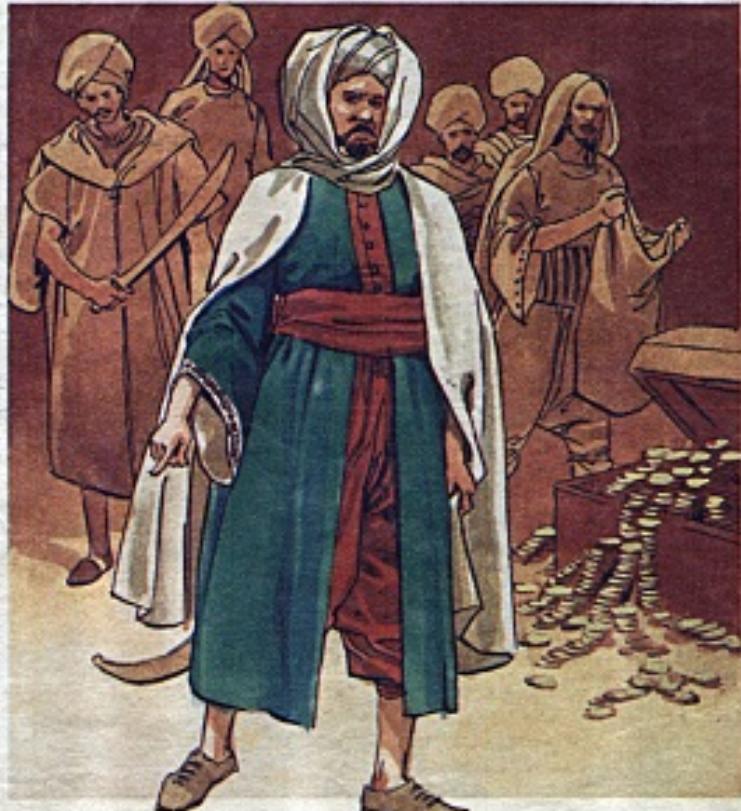
1. When Ali Baba went once again to the cave of the Forty Thieves, he found only Cassim's clothes and a note saying, "These are all that remain of the one who entered."



2. Sadly, Ali Baba realised that he would never see Cassim, his brother, alive again. He took the clothes and some gold, then turned to face the great rock. "Close, Sesame," he said, and at the magic words the secret door closed.



3. When Ali Baba returned home, Cassim's wife was heart-broken. "You must come and live with us," said Ali Baba, very kindly.



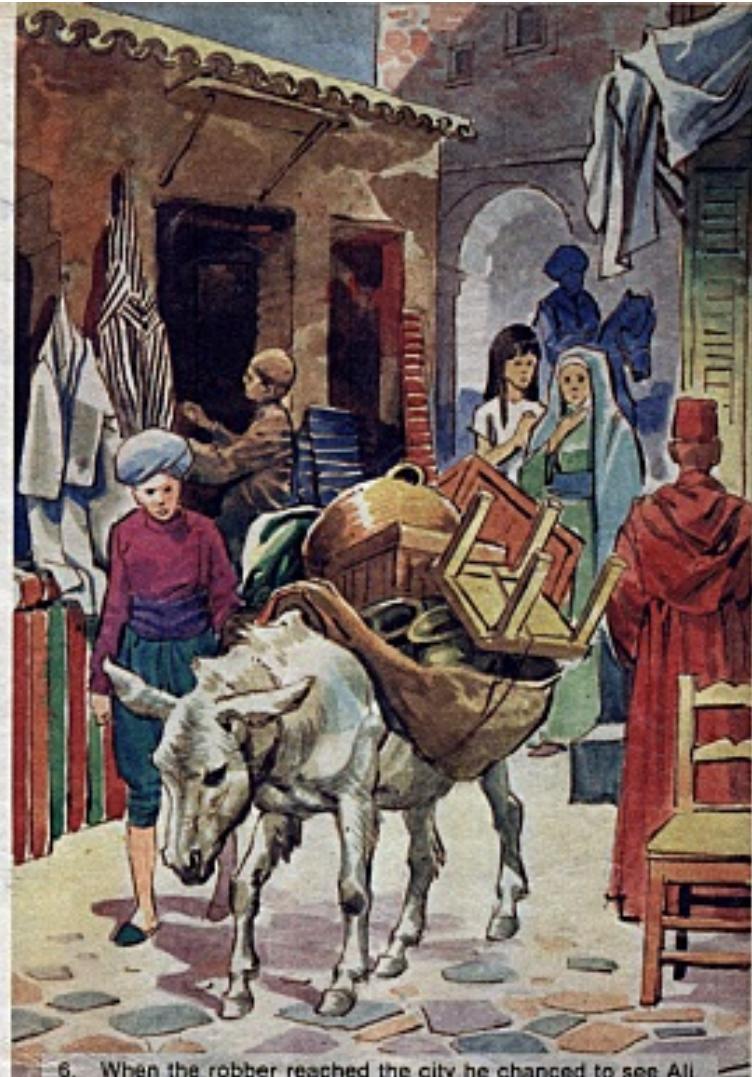
4. A few days later, the Forty Thieves visited their secret cave and soon saw that Cassim's clothes and some gold had disappeared.



5. "It seems that the man we caught in the cave was not the only one who knows our secret," frowned the robber chieftain. "One of us must go to the city to try and discover who knows the man we captured here. It must be done with cunning and skill, so as not to betray ourselves." One of them set off.



7. The old man explained that the weeping woman's husband had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared a few days before. When he heard this the robber grew thoughtful. "If her husband disappeared so mysteriously, he must have been the man I and my comrades discovered in our secret treasure cave," he thought to himself. "It seems I have found the answer very easily."



6. When the robber reached the city he chanced to see Ali Baba and his wife and Cassim's wife. The three of them had decided to move to Cassim's house. The robber saw that Cassim's wife was weeping bitterly and asked an old man the reason for it.



8. Taking care not to be seen, the robber followed Ali Baba and the two women through the twisting streets to Cassim's house. He watched them enter, and after dark, when the street was quiet, he crept forward and made a mark on the door. "Now I shall know the house again," he smiled to himself. "I can lead the chieftain to it and we will capture the other man who knows our secret cave."

The WISE OLD OWL

Knows all the answers

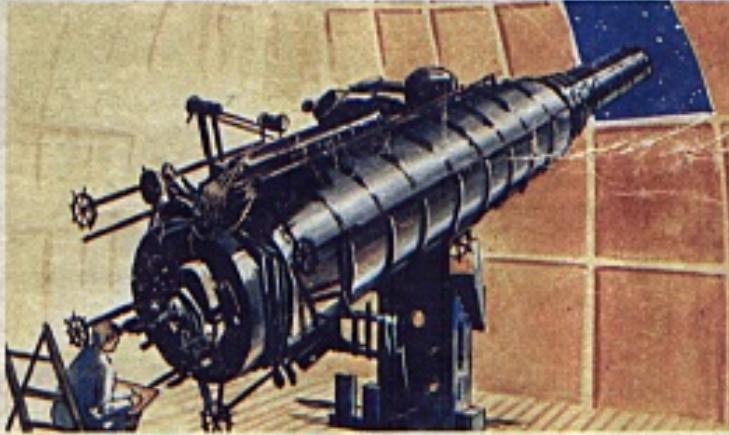


The Wise Old Owl knows the answers to some interesting questions that are often asked.



1. Why do we put oil on moving parts of machinery?

"If the moving parts of a car or a bicycle were not oiled they would squeak as they rubbed together and they would soon wear out. Oil slides between the moving parts and helps them to slip around each other, smoothly and quietly."



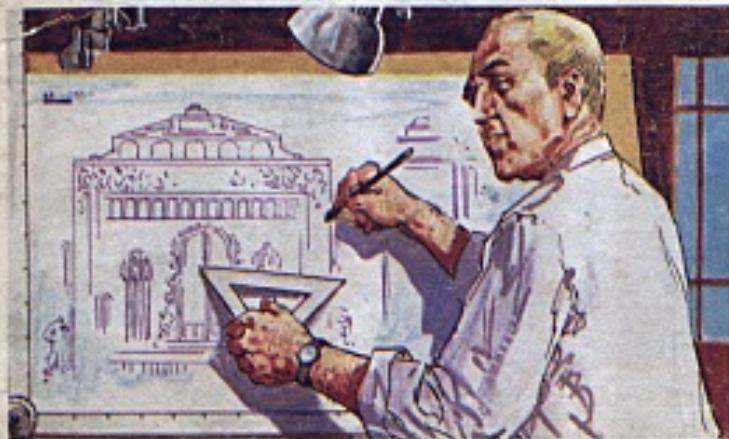
2. What is an astronomer?

"An astronomer is a man who studies the stars, the sun and the moon. Usually he works in an observatory, which is a building with a very large telescope. By looking through the telescope he is able to see the stars, the sun or the moon as though they were very much nearer and he can study them closely."



3. What is a crinoline?

"A crinoline is a very wide skirt, which was the fashion for ladies in the middle of the 19th century, a little more than 100 years ago. At one time it was the fashion for crinolines to be so big that the ladies had to wear wire hoops and a frame like a bird cage underneath their skirts to keep them in shape."



4. What is an architect?

"Before the builder of a house begins work he looks at a plan which shows him what to do. It tells him the size and shape of all the rooms. The plan is drawn by a man called an architect."



5. Who were the Crusaders?

"A long time ago, Palestine and all the Holy Places were captured by the Saracens. Knights from Europe set out to recapture the city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. These men were called Crusaders."